

News

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FOR RELEASE:

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PHOENIX-MESA CONSUMER PRICES INCREASE 2.0 PERCENT IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2003 – 1.8 PERCENT ABOVE A YEAR AGO

Consumer prices in the Phoenix-Mesa metropolitan area rose 2.0 percent during the first half of 2003 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Acting Regional Commissioner Nancy Treadwell said transportation, in turn influenced by gasoline prices, was largely responsible for the overall increase in the past six months. Compared to the same period a year ago, the all items index rose 1.8 percent. The area's Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers advanced to 103.1 (December 2001=100) during the first half of 2003. This means a market basket of goods and services that cost \$100.00 in December of 2001 would have cost \$103.10 during the last six months. Local area CPI data are not seasonally adjusted.

The overall transportation index climbed 3.7 percent during the first half of 2003. Gasoline prices jumped 17.9 percent during the same period, following an 11.5 percent increase in the second half of 2002. Compared to a year ago, consumers paid 31.4 percent more for gasoline and 5.0 percent more for overall transportation.

The index for recreation advanced 6.3 percent in the recent six-month period, following a 5.1 percent drop during the last six months of 2002. Over the year, costs for recreation increased 0.9 percent.

Prices in the other goods and services index advanced 7.3 percent during the first half of 2003. From the first half of 2002, the index rose 7.5 percent, the largest percentage gain of all major expenditure categories.

Prices for medical care increased 4.6 percent in the first half of 2003 and 5.2 percent from last year's level.

During the first six months of 2003, the overall housing index advanced 0.6 percent and has edged up 0.1 percent since the first half of 2002. The shelter component rose 1.5 percent for the six-month period and 0.3 percent over the year. Within shelter, rent of primary residence advanced 0.8 percent while owners' equivalent rent of primary residence increased 0.4 percent in the last six months. From a year ago, these indexes rose 1.0 and 0.1 percent, respectively. The household fuels and utilities

category declined 2.8 percent during the first half of 2003 and was 0.4 percent lower than the same period in 2002. Within household fuels, the natural gas service index dropped 3.5 percent during the past six months and 8.7 percent from last year's level. Prices for electricity decreased 8.2 percent during the first six months of this year and measured 0.7 percent lower than the same period a year ago. The household furnishings and operations category declined 0.3 percent in the past six months, but has increased 1.4 percent from a year ago.

The food and beverages prices did not change since the second half of 2002, yet moved up 1.5 percent over the year. During the first half of 2003, grocery prices, as measured by the food at home index, increased 0.7 percent while the prices for dining out declined 0.8 percent. For the same period, prices for alcoholic beverages advanced 1.3 percent. Over the past year, grocery prices rose 3.1 percent and alcoholic beverage prices went up 2.2 percent, while the prices for eating out decreased 0.3 percent.

Prices for education and communication increased 0.8 percent over the past six months and measured 1.9 percent higher over the past 12 months.

During the past six months, apparel prices declined 0.2 percent. From a year ago, apparel prices have fallen 6.1 percent.

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Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes for semiannual averages and percent changes for selected periods

Phoenix-Mesa, AZ (December 2001=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Semiannual average indexes			Percent change to 1st half 2003 from-	
	1st half 2002	2nd half 2002	1st half 2003	1st half 2002	2nd half 2002
Expenditure category					
All items	101.3	101.1	103.1	1.8	2.0
Food and beverages	101.0	102.5	102.5	1.5	0.0
Food	100.8	102.4	102.3	1.5	-0.1
Food at home	101.8	104.3	105.0	3.1	0.7
Food away from home	99.7	100.2	99.4	-0.3	-0.8
Alcoholic beverages	102.2	103.1	104.4	2.2	1.3
Housing	101.8	101.3	101.9	0.1	0.6
Shelter	101.1	99.9	101.4	0.3	1.5
Rent of primary residence	100.8	101.0	101.8	1.0	0.8
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence	100.1	99.8	100.2	0.1	0.4
Fuels and utilities	107.5	110.2	107.1	-0.4	-2.8
Fuels	108.5	116.8	108.0	-0.5	-7.5
Gas (piped) and electricity	108.5	116.9	107.9	-0.6	-7.7
Electricity	111.5	122.3	112.3	0.7	-8.2
Utility natural gas service	92.7	87.7	84.6	-8.7	-3.5
Household furnishings and operations	100.8	102.5	102.2	1.4	-0.3
Apparel	107.4	101.0	100.8	-6.1	-0.2
Transportation	101.0	102.3	106.1	5.0	3.7
Private transportation	101.3	103.2	106.9	5.5	3.6
Motor fuel	116.1	129.2	152.3	31.2	17.9
Gasoline (all types)	116.4	129.8	153.0	31.4	17.9
Gasoline, unleaded regular (1).....	116.6	130.7	155.1	33.0	18.7
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade (1).....	115.8	128.2	150.7	30.1	17.6
Gasoline, unleaded premium (1).....	116.4	128.0	148.3	27.4	15.9
Medical care	101.2	101.8	106.5	5.2	4.6
Recreation	98.6	93.6	99.5	0.9	6.3
Education and communication	98.9	100.0	100.8	1.9	0.8
Other goods and services	100.0	100.2	107.5	7.5	7.3

See footnotes at end of table.

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes for semiannual averages and percent changes for selected periods

Phoenix-Mesa, AZ (December 2001=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Semiannual average indexes			Percent change to 1st half 2003 from-	
	1st half 2002	2nd half 2002	1st half 2003	1st half 2002	2nd half 2002
Commodity and service group					
All items	101.3	101.1	103.1	1.8	2.0
Commodities	101.2	101.1	102.7	1.5	1.6
Commodities less food and beverages	101.3	100.3	102.8	1.5	2.5
Nondurables less food and beverages	105.4	105.4	110.4	4.7	4.7
Durables	97.5	95.4	95.6	-1.9	0.2
Services	101.4	101.1	103.4	2.0	2.3
Special aggregate indexes					
All items less medical care	101.3	101.1	102.9	1.6	1.8
All items less shelter	101.4	101.7	104.0	2.6	2.3
Commodities less food	101.4	100.4	102.9	1.5	2.5
Nondurables	103.0	103.8	106.2	3.1	2.3
Nondurables less food	105.2	105.2	109.9	4.5	4.5
Services less rent of shelter	101.6	102.6	105.8	4.1	3.1
Services less medical care services	101.4	101.0	102.8	1.4	1.8
Energy	111.8	122.2	127.2	13.8	4.1
All items less energy	100.6	99.9	101.6	1.0	1.7
All items less food and energy	100.6	99.5	101.5	0.9	2.0

1 Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.